



*A Service of Worship for  
28 April 2024*

Ring the bells that still can ring  
Forget your perfect offering  
There is a crack in everything  
That's how the light gets in.

Leonard Cohen



Preparing for worship with silence

Gathering in peace

Peace be with you!  
**And also with you!**

Ring in the hour

Silence is kept

\*Prelude

Louis Vierne  
(1870-1937)

“Préambule”

Call to Worship

+Opening Hymn #261

O Quanta Qualia

“God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us”

**God of compassion, in mercy befriend us;  
Giver of grace for our needs all-availing,  
Wisdom and strength for each day do Thou send us,  
Patience untiring and courage unfailing.**

**Wand’ring and lost, Thou has sought us and found us,  
Stilled our rude hearts with Thy word of consoling;  
Wrap now Thy peace, like a mantle, around us,  
Guarding our thoughts and our passions controlling.**

**How shall we stray, with Thy hand to direct us,  
Thou who the stars in their courses art guiding?  
What shall we fear, with Thy power to protect us,  
We who walk forth in Thy greatness confiding?**

*\*Please hold silence and remain seated during the prelude*

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

+Opening Prayer

**Spirit of life, be present with us this hour.  
Join us today as we gather  
in a wider search for truth and purpose.  
In this quest, may we greet one another  
with open hearts and minds;  
may we inspire each other  
to consider new questions  
and seek deeper meaning;  
and may we cultivate wisdom and compassion.  
Let all who enter this sanctuary  
see a welcome face,  
hear a kind word,  
and find comfort in this community.  
And may all that is done and said here today  
be in service to love and justice.**

Invitation

Scripture Lesson

Psalm 22

These are our sacred stories.

**Thanks be to God.**

Time for Children

+Response:

Hymn to Joy

*Mortals, join the happy chorus which the morning stars began;  
Love divine is reigning o'er us, joining all in heaven's plan.  
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife,  
Joyful music leads us homeward, in the triumph song of life.*

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**O God,  
Make us brave and bold and scrupled enough  
to know that to love our enemies  
does not mean to be afraid to meet them  
in a daily thrust toward justice;  
and in the bold venture of saying what we mean,  
and meaning what we say,  
to be trustworthy in striving toward intimacy.**

**Arouse us to pay the price of being merciful  
that our lives may reflect your mercy to us.**

**Empower us to dare  
to be compassionate  
that your dreams for our humanity may come true,  
to be disciplined yet flexible  
that we may prepare the way for your kingdom  
in our hearts and in your world;  
through Jesus. Amen**

Words of Assurance

Music

Alan Hovhaness

*“From the End of the Earth”  
Hear my cry, hear my cry O God.  
From the end of the earth I will cry unto Thee,  
when my heart is overwhelmed:  
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.  
For thou hast been a shelter for me,  
and a strong tower from the enemy,  
I will trust in the covert of Thy wings.  
Alleluia.*

Silent Reflection

Prayer

Offering  
Offertory

Martha Sobaje  
(b. 1948)

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

+Prayer of Dedication

**This is the blessing  
we cannot speak  
by ourselves.**

**This is the blessing  
we cannot summon  
by our own devices,  
cannot shape  
to our purpose,  
cannot bend  
to our will.**

**This is the blessing  
that comes  
when we leave behind  
our aloneness  
when we gather  
together  
when we turn  
toward one another.**

**This is the blessing  
that blazes among us  
when we speak  
the words  
strange to our ears  
when we finally listen  
into the chaos  
when we breathe together  
at last.**

+Doxology

Old Hundredth

***Praise God the Source of life and birth.  
Praise God the Word, who came to earth.  
Praise God the Spirit, holy flame,  
All glory, honor to God's name! Amen.***

+Please stand in body or spirit

## THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

+Hymn #286

St. Bride

“Give to the Winds Thy Fears”

**Give to the winds thy fears; hope and be undismayed:  
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears, God shall lift up thy head.**

**Through waves and clouds and storms God gently clears thy way;  
Wait patiently; so shall this night soon end in joyous day.**

**Leave to God’s sov’ reign sway to choose and to command;  
So shalt thou, wond’ring, own God’s way, how wise, how strong God’s hand!**

**On God the Lord rely, and safe shalt thou go on;  
Fix on God’s work thy steadfast eye, so shall thy work be done.**

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

*Our communion elements include both wine and water, and gluten free and  
vegan crackers. All are always welcome to communion at Covenant.*

+Affirmation of Faith

**Gather in the words**

**Bright white peonies**

**Vivid scarlet dianthus**

**Velvety yellow roses**

**Arrange them in artful phrases**

**Sadness with joy**

**Celebration with mourning**

**Now with then**

**Carry them in handfuls**

**To places of hope**

**Set them with care**

**Say the names**

**The lost and The living**

**Together.**

*+Please stand in body or spirit*

# Blessed Assurance Found in This Place

Kathleen Cook

ASSURANCE 9.10.9.9 with refrain

Phoebe Palmer Knapp

Bles-sed as - sur - ance found in this place, — Gath - ring to -  
 Bles-sed as - sur - rance found in your words, — Sto - ries of  
 Bles-sed as - sur - ance in songs that we sing, — Lift - ing our

geth - er, home - com - ing and grace. — Wel - come the stran - ger in - to the  
 hard - ship and tri - als o'er - come. — Pro - mis - es made and cov - e - nants  
 spi - rits for hours, and days. — Shar - ing the work of care for the

fold, — tel - ling and list - ening, those hea - vy loads. — This is our  
 kept, — Jour - neys su - stained by mer - cy and grace. — This is our  
 world, — Shar - ing our plan - et, your gift to us all. — These are our

sto - ry. This is our song. — See - ing Your Fac - es All the day  
 sto - ry. This is our song. — Tel - ling the king - dom - All the day  
 sto - ries These are our songs. — Sing - ing your great love All our days

long. — This is our sto - ry. This is our  
 long. — This is our sto - ry. This is our  
 long. — These are our sto - ries. These are our

song. — Show - ing your Car - ing All the day long.  
 song. — Lear - ning the won - ders All the day long.  
 songs. — Sing - ing your prai - ses All the day long.



Benediction

\*Postlude

Paul Manz  
(1919-2009)

“All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above”

*\*Please hold silence and remain seated during the postlude*

## Worship Notes

The worship leader is **Lisa Spiro**.

The Call to Worship is from “Meeting the Messiah” by Jeffrey Symynkywicz L.S.

The Opening Sentences are by Kathy Huff.

The Unison Confession is adapted from *My Heart in My Mouth* by Ted Loder.

The Prayer of Dedication is “When We Breathe Together, A Blessing for Pentecost Day” from *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons* by Jan Richardson.

The Affirmation of Faith is “Together” by **Kathleen Cook**.

The text of “Blessed Assurance Found in This Place” is by **Kathleen Cook**.

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### **Education 9:30 - 10:20 a.m.**

Adult Education - Mattie Jenkins, a Catholic Worker at Casa Juan Diego and aspiring farmer, is excited to share the depth and richness that she has found by living more connected to the earth, and how this has shaped her understanding of God and of her calling. She will share her experience with permaculture, regenerative farming, and being a Catholic Worker and how the Creator of everything has led her every step of the way.

- *Ann Stout*

### Children & Youth Education -

Children’s Lesson

Title: 6,000 Tries

Lesson: Perseverance

Youth Lesson

Today’s text takes up the related themes of the love of God and being children of God. Earlier in this letter, John has addressed the readers as children, and now for the first time he considers what it means to be children of God. What do you know about being a “child”? How might you understand your role in this life as an “offspring”? How has your identity (who you know yourself to be) been impacted by that understanding? Beyond biology, how might you fill in the blank: I am a child of (the) \_\_\_\_\_. I am a descendant of who/what?

Scripture: 1 John 3:1-7

- *Trena’ Jamison*

## Children and Youth Announcements

### Events

- **May 5:** Cinco de Mayo Taco Splash Day
- **June 9-13, 2024:** McMurry University Youth Camp Passport **(please see newsletter for sign-up link)**.
- **July 27-30, 2024:** Heart of Texas Camp Brownwood, TX Children Camp Passport, **(please see newsletter for sign-up link)**.

### Calendar

Sun. Apr 28	9:30am	Adult Education, Adult Education classroom on the 2nd floor of the Huff Fellowship Hall Building
	9:30am	Children & Youth Education, Room B, 2nd floor of the Huff Fellowship Hall Building
	10:20am	Hospitality, Huff Fellowship Hall Building
	10:30am	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary
	11:00am	Sunday Worship in-person, Sanctuary and via live-stream, YouTube
	12:15pm	Handbell Rehearsal, Sanctuary/Children's Area
Tue. Apr 30	1:00pm	Lunchtime Lectionary Lab, Zoom
Thurs. May 2	10:00am	Community Group, Zoom
	7:00pm	Covenant Singers Rehearsal, Sanctuary

## **Helpful Information**

**Childcare:** Childcare is provided in the children's area beginning at 9:30 a.m. Children aged 2 and under are invited to the nursery. Children aged 3 to 9 are invited to the children's area after the Time for Children.

**Visitor's Card:** If you're a visitor with us, please submit a Visitor's Card.

**Celebrations and Concerns:** If you would like to share a celebration or concern with the Covenant community, please submit a Celebrations and Concerns Form.

**Membership:** If you are interested in learning more about Covenant, we encourage you to talk with one of the ministers or the worship leader. Email [Office@covenanthouston.org](mailto:Office@covenanthouston.org).

**Newsletter:** To subscribe to the newsletter, send a request to [office@covenanthouston.org](mailto:office@covenanthouston.org).

**Office Hours:** The church office is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 2pm.

**Covenant Recycles:** If you do not wish to keep your order of worship, please recycle it by placing it on the stand located in the narthex.

*Covenant Church affirms the sanctity, dignity, and equality  
of human beings and the value of all life in the universe.*

*We welcome persons of all racial and ethnic heritages, all sexual orientations,  
all gender identities, and all faith perspectives to our Christian community.*

*We stand for each individual's right to worship God and to respond  
to God's call to ministry in her or his own understanding  
of God's all-encompassing love.*

*We value a holistic approach to faith and seek to worship in ways that are  
intellectually credible, emotionally stimulating, spiritually engaging  
and contemporarily relevant.*

*We value music and art and ritual to express what we cannot ever fully say.  
We value participation so that we might hear many approaches  
to our shared faith.*

**Covenant Church, an ecumenical, liberal, Baptist congregation**

Members of Covenant, Ministers

Fran Avera, Minister of Music, Emerita

Brian Buck, Facilities Coordinator

Monique Cruz, Office and Financial Administrator

Trena' Jamison, Director of Children and Youth

David Lee, Director of Music

Laura Mayo, Senior Minister

Jason Steiner, Organist

4949 Caroline Street  
Houston, Texas 77004  
713-668-8830

[www.covenanthouston.org](http://www.covenanthouston.org)  
[office@covenanthouston.org](mailto:office@covenanthouston.org)

*Covenant Church recognizes the laws of the State of Texas and the rights of its citizens. Consistent with this acknowledgment and with respect for the values of our Church, we also acknowledge that our congregants and visitors seek a safe and comfortable space for worship and celebration. **In that spirit, we request that all firearms be left in a secure place outside of the Church.** We thank God for providing us with the opportunity to worship together and to continue to respect each other as human beings.*